

3/22/2020

Family,

Greetings from Kenya!

This update contains some very exciting news for us, and also shares a bit of what is going on here at MpM with all the “world gone crazy” happening around us. The Coronavirus has affected us here in ways we would not have imagined a couple of weeks ago.



It has been a bit of a roller coaster for us lately as we found out that a couple of the adoption agencies were ready to start placing babies for adoption again. We quickly had one of the agencies send a social worker with some potential Forever Family matches so we could pray through them. And we were excited to find a minimum of six good matches for some of our littles.



But, the day before the adoption committee was to approve the matches and release the babies for adoption, Coronavirus caused a government shutdown which trickled down to almost everyone. So once again we are in a holding pattern, waiting on the powers that be to do something.

Sadly, the incoming has not stopped so with our latest addition (at the time of this typing!) brought us to 32 babies at MpM. We are quite literally bursting at the seams! We were out celebrating Ethan’s birthday last week when we got the call for our newest, so we let Ethan name him. His name pick was Ethan James, so now we have two Ethans at our house!

It also means our staff are working a bit harder than normal. As we work to add additional help to care for the babies, we have been VERY blessed to have Brea Oravec join us the past couple of months. We have known Brea for many years as her family went to the same church we did when we lived in WI many years ago. Brea’s mom, Sandie, is also the one who makes and sells lots of hand-made critters, and puts in many hours in other ways to raise funds for MpM. (If you follow us on Face Book you have seen pictures of the Owls, Mahali Monsters, and much more.)

Brea had been here on short term trips a couple of times before, and shared with us last year that she felt God was calling her here full-time. As we prayed, we also felt this Calling was genuine, but we wanted her to spend three months here to confirm it for us all.

So, in mid-January she traveled to Kenya and became a part of the team caring for the babies. It became clear quickly that God had indeed planted in her a deep passion for the babies and she has become a very strong part of the team here.

We are sending you this exciting announcement that Brea is joining MpM for (at least) a two-year term as the International Communications Director, as well as being an Auntie to the babies and assisting in their care and growth.

The plan was for her to be here until April 8, and then return to the US for a couple of months to continue building a prayer and support team. And then return in mid-June as a full-time staff member. But.....



..... back to the Coronavirus shutdown. With all that is going on, travel being suppressed, etc., it looks like she will not be able to leave here on April 8. While we are excited that she will still be here to help out with the ministry, she is going to lose some valuable face time building her support team.

At this point we are unsure when she will be able to return to the US for a time, but we are praying it can work out for her to travel in late April and then return in mid-June to be here while we Bells leave for our furlough.

Having Brea here is a huge blessing for us, especially when we are on furlough.

I share all of that to put before you a request, for you to pray about becoming a part of the critical team that Brea needs as she serves here. There is no question that the prayer support you have given this ministry, and the Bell family over the past years has been critical for our survival.

Brea needs that same undergirding of prayer as she enters the mission field full-time. She has only begun to experience some of the hurdles and challenges that Satan will put in front of her as she strives to be the Hands and Feet of Jesus here at MpM.

Secondly, while not as critical as the prayer support, she needs the funding to enable her to serve here.

You have enabled this ministry to rescue 234 babies since we started, and place 113 little ones with their new Forever Family. (We trust this number will soon climb quickly!)

We now ask you to consider enabling Brea to help this ministry grow and reach even more abandoned angels.

Monthly or one time gifts can be sent to Mahali pa Maisha, PO Box 262, Sulphur Springs, IN 47388. Or donations can be made on our website at mpmkenya.org. Just note that the gifts are for Brea Oravec. By the way, check out our updated website, new video, and more. Brea did that as well! 😊

As for the Bell family, we are pressing on each day and while many days seem like they may overwhelm us, it has been clear that God is giving us all we need to make it through.

Since mid Sept there has been only two nights that we did not have at least one, and usually more, babies in our home. So especially for Jen, a full nights sleep is simply unknown.

Ethan and Selah are doing well in school and are making their way through 4th Grade. Granted, they do wonder why their friends are out of school (due to the virus shutdown) and they have to keep doing it each day! 😊

We are closely following the news in the US and elsewhere regarding the Coronavirus news and wanted to let you know that Kenya certainly has not escaped the turbulence. As mentioned above the government has shut down many if not all of its branches which included the courts which we need to handle many legal items.

Our local store, (while we do still have toilet paper!) has limited the number of people in the store to 50 at any one time. And no children are allowed in.

We have planned our furlough back to the US from June 24 until Aug 19, but as with many things, those dates look like they need to be fluid if travel restrictions do not change.

So, there are many prayer requests we would ask you to lift up to our Father on a regular basis please:

- Foremost on our minds is for adoption to start moving so our little ones can get their family.
- Pray for this ministry, the babies and all working here are kept safe from the sickness.
- We ask you to pray for our families back in the US. It is tough being so far way at a time like this.
- With the travel restrictions, it means Brea will not be returning to the US for her time until after her original travel visa expires. With the Immigration Dept shut down we are unsure what it will look like getting her visa extended. Please pray for a smooth extension.
- And pray for Brea, (and her family back in WI) her initial plunge into missionary life has been a little “different” than we might have planned due to so many unknowns.
- Please lift up the Bell family. We are used to stress at many levels, but the past six months have definitely tested our limits!
- And finally, please join us in praying for each of you. We know we are all going through some virgin waters with lock downs, layoffs, shortages, and more. But we also know that God was not taken by surprise and will see us all through in His Plan.

In closing, we want to again than you for your support, prayers, and love. I will be posting current updates on Face Book on the Mahali pa Maisha page, so please keep an eye there for the latest news.

Safely in our Fathers Arms,

The Bells